

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8186

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 885

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3055

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN, PEPR, SY, LE, US

SUBJECT: SYRIA PROTESTS ALLEGED STATEMENTS OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG

1. SUMMARY. FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS PROTESTED AND REQUESTED
CLARIFICATION OF ALLEGED STATEMENTS MADE BY AMBASSADOR YOUNG
IN INTERVIEW WITH LONDON MAGAZINE.

2. FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS SIAGE SUM-
MONED CHARGE EVENING MAY 25. SAID HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED
BY HIGHER AUTHORITIES TO RAISE SUBJECT OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S
INTERVIEW WITH LONDON-BASED MIDDLE EAST MAGAZINE. HE THEN
TRANSLATED FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DAILY PRESS BULLETIN
(WHICH GOES TO FOREIGN MINISTRY AND PRESIDENCY OFFICIALS)
AS FOLLOWS: "MR. ANDREW YOUNG HAS STATED THAT BOTH LEBANON
AND SYRIA ACCEPT THE ISRAELI PRESENCE IN SOUTH LEBANON AND
DO NOT WISHTO SEE IT END. HE HAS ALSO SAID THAT ALL
OTHER PARTIES IN THE AREA EXCEPT THE PALESTINIANS
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ACCEPT THE ISRAELI PRESENCE. THIS APPEARED IN AN
INTERVIEW WITH THE MIDDLE EAST MAGAZINE, PUBLISHED IN
LONDON. ASKED ABOUT MEANS OF ASSURING ISRAELI DEPARTURE
FROM SOUTH LEBANON, MR. YOUNG SAID, 'I THINK WE COULD
GET THEM OUT. WE SENT THE UN FORCES QUICKLY. BUT I
AM NOT SURE THAT LEBANON WANTS THE ISRAELIS TO DEPART.
STATEMENTS WHICH OFFICIALS MAKE IN THE UN DO NOT MEAN

EVERYTHING. I AM NOT HEARING THE SAME STATEMENTS FROM THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT OR FROM SYRIA WHICH DID NOT OFFICIALLY MAKE A BIG NOISE, EVEN IN THE UN.'

"YOUNG SAID THAT IF ISRAEL WITHDREW BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ORDER IN THE AREA, THEN IT WOULD FALL TO SYRIA TO TAKE CARE OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN DISPUTING PARTIES; THIS WAS ONE OF THE REASONS THAT LED US TO INTRODUCE UN FORCES. ASKED TO GIVE ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION OF THIS VIEWPOINT, MR. YOUNG SAID, 'I AM SURE THE CHRISTIANS DO NOT WANT THE ISRAELIS TO WITHDRAW NOW. TO DO JUSTICE TO ALL PARTIES, I SHOULD SAY THAT BEFORE ISRAEL'S ENTRY INTO THE AREA, IT WAS VERY UNSETTLED.' ASKED WHY HE WAS GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT HE ACCEPTED ISRAEL'S PRESENCE, HE ANSWERED, 'ALL PARTIES IN THE AREA EXCEPT THE PALESTINIANS ACCEPT THE ISRAELI PRESENCE.'"

3. SIAGE AND SYRIA WAS UPSET WITH THIS ARTICLE, PARTICULARLY AS IT HAD MADE KNOWN ITS POSITION OF ABSOLUTE OPPOSITION TO THE ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON NOT ONLY PUBLICLY BUT ALSO REPEATEDLY AND SPECIFICALLY TO U.S. REPRESENTATIVES.

4. CHARGE SAID HE HAD NOT SEEN INTERVIEW OR HEARD ANYTHING AUTHORITATIVE ABOUT IT ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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A REFERENCE TO IT ON MORNING BBC NEWS. AS FOR U.S. POLICY, SINCE THE FIRST DAY OF ISRAEL'S ACTION, WE HAD URGED RAPID AND COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANESE TERRITORY. WE HAD SPONSORED UNSC RESOLUTIONS TO THIS END AND HAD WORKED HARD TO BRING UNIFIL FORCES UP TO AN EFFECTIVE LEVEL. SECRETARY VANCE HAD PERSONALLY URGED PM BEGIN TO SET A FIRM DATE FOR FINAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. CHARGE ALSO AFFIRMED THAT SYRIA'S POSITION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF FULL AND RAPID ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WAS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY USG.

5. SIAGE NOTED THESE POINTS AND ASKED THAT WE OBTAIN WHATEVER INFORMATION WE COULD ABOUT YOUNG INTERVIEW. GOING OFF THE RECORD, HE SAID INTERVIEW HAD BEEN THE TALK OF THE MINISTRY THROUGHOUT THE DAY. IT HAD ALSO BEEN POINTED TO BY OFFICIALS WHO HAD OPPOSED SYRIA'S LOW-KEY RENEWAL OF UNDOF MANDATE AS JUSTIFICATION FOR SHOE THUMPING PERFORMANCES IN THE UN SINCE OTHERWISE THE BIG POWERS TEND TO TAKE YOU FOR GRANTED. CHARGE SAID HE REGRETTED THESE REACTIONS. U.S. APPRECIATED SYRIAN COOPERATION ON UN MATTERS. HE PROMISED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THIS PURPORTED INTERVIEW.

6. ACTION REQUESTED. DEPT PLEASE PROVIDE WHATEVER INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THIS INTERVIEW AND TALKING POINTS TO RESPOND TO SYRIANS. AMEMBASSY LONDON PLEASE PROVIDE TEXT OF RELEVANT PORTIONS OF INTERVIEW TELEGRAPHICALLY SO WE CAN CORRECT ANY DISTORTIONS IN SYRIAN VERSION QUOTED ABOVE.

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Message Attributes

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